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30 December 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: DCOP

SUBJECT: Holding Area for Albanians, U. S. Zone Germany

1. As you know, I believe an arrangement whereby the French would do our training of Albanians for us in French North Africa for future operations into Albania would be desirable. However, I do not believe we should at this time confuse this question with that of the Holding Area in the U. S. Zone of Germany for the following reasons:

a. The original concept of the Holding Area in Germany was brought about by the need for immediate action to preserve the availability of numbers of Albanians in IRO camps in Italy who were being sent to other lands, primarily Australia, for resettlement. This question has been plaguing us for many months; meanwhile, the problem grows more acute. We recognized this in our recent conferences with the British in that part of the revised FIEND Operational Plan which states that we will make every effort to have a Holding Area in the U. S. Zone of Germany by 31 January. We stand a fair chance of fulfilling this deadline if we proceed on our present course. I do not believe, however, that we could fulfill that deadline or even remotely approach it if we were to raise the question of moving the Albanians direct from Italy to French North Africa for training for the following reasons:

(1) The British exhibited in our recent conference a marked antipathy to the idea of French participation in FIEND. Obviously, it would take considerable time to work the British out of this position.

(2) [] protestations to the contrary notwithstanding, I believe he would have to obtain a number of time-consuming high level clearances within the French Government to embark on this operation.

b. The original concept of the Holding Area in the U. S. Zone of Germany is of an entirely overt operation, the open nature of which would have the advantage of facilitating relatively large scale movements out of IRO jurisdiction. It would also permit assessment of recruits and indeed the actual recruiting itself

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under homogenous and somewhat more secure surroundings. Recruitment in Italy of agents and their transport as such to French North Africa would sacrifice these advantages. It should be noted that it was precisely at this step that the first security leak of significance occurred in Operation VALUABLE.

2. I recommend therefore, that ADPC's approval be obtained for proceeding with the Albanian holding area in the U. S. Zone of Germany as originally envisioned and as a prerequisite for getting the FIEND operation once again under way regardless of other base problems which may still be under consideration or may arise in the future.

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